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ABSTRACT

This document provides an account of the status of Hispanics in inner-city public high schools, and recommendations for improving that status. The report has two main parts. The first gives background data which reveal, among other things, that although the majority of Hispanic students enter high school with aspirations as high as any social group, 45% of Mexican American and Puerto Rican students never finish high school (compared to 17% of Anglos). The second part contains seven sets of findings and recommendations for improvement. Half of these relate to outreach and cooperative endeavors on the part of schools and other sectors of society, notably the business sector. The remainder relate more specifically to the internal structure, organization, curriculum, and especially the culture of schools. The recommendations stress the importance of improved teaching of both Spanish and English, and the need of Hispanic students for relationship with caring adults. And finally, the Federal role is discussed, and Congress is urged to be more precise about targeting block grant money to students with special needs. (KH)

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MAKE SOME-THING HAPPEN

UD 023 994

Hispanics and Urban School Reform

Volume I

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

"...we work hard and we try and our teachers care, but we are not treated fairly. Our school is poor. If this Commission cares, please make something happen..."

—Hispanic student

"Make Something Happen"

Hispanics
and
Urban High School
Reform
Volume I

National Commission on
Secondary Education For Hispanics

Hispanic Policy Development Project

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The editors invite readers to submit their comments and suggestions. Every communication will be read by the editors, and each will be given careful attention, although it will not be possible to send a personal reply to each letter. Please send your observations to—

Make Something Happen
Editorial Office
Hispanic Policy Development Project
1001 Connecticut Avenue NW—Suite 310
Washington, D.C. 20036

The fundamental finding of the *National Commission on Secondary Schooling for Hispanics* is that a shocking proportion of this generation of Hispanic young people is being wasted. Wasted because their educational needs are neither understood nor met, their high aspirations unrecognized, their promising potential stunted.

The dropout rates and low school achievement levels of a staggering number of Hispanic high school students have a direct, devastating effect on their communities. The damage inflicted on young Hispanics today threatens society tomorrow.

By the year 2000, in key areas of this nation, the majority population will be Hispanic. In these areas, the future of arts, sciences, and government, the prosperity of business enterprises, and the social health of entire communities will depend mainly on Hispanics: on their participation in community affairs and in the economy, and on their ability to support themselves and their families. Logic and common sense argue that society must make determined efforts to halt and reverse the wasting of generations of young Hispanics.

The National Commission on Secondary Schooling for Hispanics concentrated its attention on inner-city public schools. We present in this report a series of recommendations designed to assist communities and educators in preparing young Hispanics for leadership and full participation in the nation's future. Curriculum prescriptions are designed to provide Hispanics with skills they will use throughout their lives, and with an education that will challenge and fulfill their intellectual and cultural potential.

The recommendations also suggest measures to alleviate the high level of stress which many inner-city children experience. Hispanic students need—and realize that they need—relationships with caring adults who can give them insightful guidance. These recommendations recognize this need and recognize as well the circumstances which impel so many young Hispanics into the world of work long before their formal education has been completed. The Commission's recommendations underscore the need to prepare Hispanics for lifelong learning and to involve Hispanic parents in the education of their children.

The Commission recommends language instruction that will give Hispanic students full command of English. At the same time, the Commission recommends that the Hispanic students' ability to use the Spanish language be encouraged and developed. This ability is a rich resource, both for the individual and for the nation; Spanish speaking citizens are important to this nation's relationships within the Western Hemisphere, and the ability to speak Spanish should be encouraged more generally throughout our educational system.

We urge policymakers to consider the recommendations of the National Commission on Secondary Schooling for Hispanics to ensure that the national quest for excellence leaves no group behind. In order for excellence to have meaning, it must become a reality **for all young Americans.**

FOR THE COMMISSION

Mari-Luci Jaramillo
Co-Chair

Paul N. Ylvisaker
Co-Chair

Members National Commission on Secondary Schooling For Hispanics

Co-Chair

The Honorable Mari-Luci Jaramillo
Former U.S. Ambassador to Honduras
Associate Dean, College of Education
University of New Mexico

Co-Chair

Dr. Paul N. Ylvisaker
Dean Emeritus
Harvard Graduate School of Education

Ms. Patricia V. Asip
Marketing Programs Manager
Hispanic Markets, Corporate Marketing
JCPenney Company, Inc.

Dr. Adrienne Y. Bailey
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The College Board

Miss Jean Fairfax
Director, Division of Legal Information and Community Service
NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund

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Associate Superintendent
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New York City Board of Education

Dr. Angel Quintero-Alfaro
Professor
School of Graduate Education
Inter American University

Mr. Robert A. Reveles
Vice President, Government Affairs
Homestake Mining Company

***Dr. Tomás Rivera,** Chancellor
University of California, Riverside

***Dr. Juan Rosario,** Executive Director
ASPIRA of America, Inc.

Mrs. Dorothy Shields
Director of Education, AFL-CIO

*Deceased—May 16, 1984

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Contents

Volume I

Introduction 9

The Bare Facts 10

Summary: Findings and Recommendations 13

The Background 19

- The Hispanic Reality 19
- National High School Demographics 20
- The Reality of Hispanic Education 23

Findings and Recommendations 27

- "Caring" and The School as a Member of the Community 28
- "What You Get To Learn" 32
- Work and School 35
- English—Our Primary Language 38
- Spanish—A National Resource 40
- The Federal Role 41

School Reform for All Our Children 45

Methodology 49

Notes 53

References 54

Volume II

Foreword 9

Section One: Hispanic Profiles 13

Size, Growth, and Characteristics of the National Hispanic Population 15

Comparative Analysis of Hispanic Population Subgroups 29

Characteristics of the Mexican American Population 35

Characteristics of the Puerto Rican Population 39

Characteristics of the Cuban American Population 43

Characteristics of Other Hispanics 47

Section Two: Graphics, "High School and Beyond" 55

Section Three: Reflections 69

Making Good Schools from Bad 71
Frank Montalvo

Equity and Excellence 75
Peter D. Roos

Hispanic Youth Employment: Some Lessons and Models for Business Involvement 79
Gary Walker

Hispanics in Fast Food Jobs 84
Ivan Charner and *Bryna Shore Fraser*

Executive Summary: Programs for Adolescent Hispanic Parents in Connecticut 95
Hyung C. Chung and *Saúl Sibirsky*

Suggested Plan for Reviewing the Status of Data for Monitoring The Progress and Outcomes of Secondary Schooling for Hispanics 98
Dorothy Waggoner

Introduction

"...my father never went to school. My mother made it to third grade. They weren't educated. The thing they have taught me is to struggle hard, not for them, but for myself so that I can do better than they have..."

—Hispanic student

Across the nation, wherever Hispanics represent a growing proportion of the high school population, reliable national research shows:

- That the majority of Hispanics enter high school with educational and career aspirations as high as those of any other group in our society;[1]
- That their parents are deeply concerned about their schooling;[2] and
- That students want to succeed in jobs that will give them financial security and a sense of dignity.[3]

Many Hispanic students fulfill this potential and make valuable contributions in all sectors of society, but far too many leave school without diplomas, or graduate with insufficient skills that lock them out of the job market or into dead-end jobs.[4] Certainly the nation and its educators are concerned about pupil achievement. The number of major reports released recently which evaluate and analyze the nation's secondary schools demonstrates this. Business and industry are vocal about their need for productive managers and workers and have begun to seek ways in which they can become more actively involved in education. Yet the mismatch between the high aspirations and intentions of all and the low achievement of so many leads inescapably to the conclusion that something is dreadfully wrong.

The National Commission on Secondary Schooling for Hispanics was created by **the Hispanic Policy Development Project (HPDP)** to find out why so many inner-city public high schools are not more successful in educating Hispanics. Its 16 members—Hispanics and non-Hispanics—were drawn from diverse backgrounds and professions. Over a nine-month period, the Commission held meetings in New York, Miami, Los Angeles, Chicago, and San Antonio with students, parents, teachers, administrators, counselors, educators, and business people; reviewed the literature on the subject; visited and heard about successful programs; analyzed the major recent reports on secondary education; conducted analyses of data produced by "High School and Beyond," an ongoing, national study of high school sophomores and seniors; sought the benefit of expert opinions; and deliberated and discussed the basic questions at length.*

This report of the Commission's work is meant to complement the numerous studies which have sparked the growing national debate on high school reform. It provides a perspective on Hispanics in the inner-city public high school that the Commission believes is generally lacking in the other reports. Most of these documents pay scant attention to the human element—the varying strengths and vulnerabilities, outlooks, sense of identity and outside responsibilities, and academic backgrounds and achievements that different groups of students bring with them to the high school classroom and to the environment in which they live.

The Commission has not attempted to analyze every aspect of secondary schooling that may affect Hispanics. Instead, it has focused on selected findings and recommendations which it feels can make a dif-

*See **Methodology** on page 49.

ference and improve the performance of inner-city Hispanic students and their schools. The Commission hopes that this report will help educators, parents, and community leaders think through strategies to better serve these Hispanic students. It is undergirded by encouraging examples of success, and its recommendations are selectively focused on that which can be done at a cost society can bear.

When the Commission commenced its evaluation of Hispanics in secondary schools, it rapidly became clear that in the minds of the general public a deep concern over language overshadowed other educational issues. Our analysis suggests that, in the main, this concern is rooted in the unfortunate framing of the policy debate over transitional bilingual education. When we examined the elements of this issue, we

The Bare Facts

1. The majority of Hispanics enter high school with educational and career aspirations as high as any other group in our society.
2. Forty percent of all Hispanic students who leave school do so *before* reaching the 10th grade and 25 percent of Hispanics who enter high school are over-age.
3. Forty-five percent of Mexican American and Puerto Rican students who enter high school never finish, compared to 17 percent of Anglo students.
4. Hispanics are the youngest and the fastest growing population group in the nation.
5. As the general population ages, Hispanics will become the majority of the school population in many cities and a rising percentage of the population in many other parts of the nation. The future and prosperity of these communities and the United States itself will be correspondingly related to the development and progress of their Hispanic families.
6. The Hispanic population in the United States is composed of distinct groups who come from Mexico, the Caribbean, Central America, South America, and Spain. There are great diversities within and among these groups, but in a number of respects, their overall statistics can be distinguished from other groups in the U.S. population.
7. Hispanics are the most highly urbanized population in the United States. Eighty-five percent of Hispanics, 66 percent of Anglos, and 76 percent of Blacks reside in metropolitan areas.
8. Hispanics are highly concentrated. Seventy percent live in five states—California, Florida, Illinois, New York, and Texas.
9. Most poor Hispanics live in segregated neighborhoods in deteriorating inner cities.
10. Over two-thirds of all Hispanics attend schools with student bodies that are more than 50 percent minority.
11. Schools that Hispanics attend usually are overcrowded, or are poorly equipped, or have lower per-pupil budgets than other schools in adjacent areas.
12. Hispanics experience a high rate of poverty—38.2 percent for youth under 18, compared to 17.3 percent for Anglos.
13. Hispanic males work more hours per week while attending school than does any other group.
14. Despite the economic difficulties of many, Hispanics constituted a 70-billion-dollar market in 1983.
15. While many Hispanics have found success in rewarding jobs and professions, a disproportionate number have not: Unemployment is 40 to 50 percent higher than for Anglos. Many Hispanics are marginally employed or under employed.
16. Many Hispanic students suffer high levels of stress as a consequence of poverty, culture clashes, and the marginal, often violent quality of life in the inner city.

found that the original controversy centered on the proper federal role in the education of limited-English-proficient children. Today, that original issue has been replaced by acrimonious debate over the merits of bilingualism, a much broader concern which clouds the issue of educational equity that bilingual education seeks to remedy. A decade after the historic Lau decision of the U.S. Supreme Court—which held that non-English speaking students should not be expected to learn English before they can "participate effectively" in subject matter instruction—we found a deep cleavage between various groups of educators and theorists. At one extreme are those who believe that no language other than English should be used for school instruction, and that we cannot find better methods of teaching English unless we abandon the concept of transitional bilingual education; at the other extreme stand those who believe, with equal conviction, that any method other than bilingual education is a threat to the survival of a valuable linguistic asset, Spanish.

We believe both sides are wrong. Their convictions have evolved into intransigence which now inhibits any movement forward in the service of children.

In order to orient itself properly to language issues, the Commission held lengthy discussions and conducted a careful examination of the central elements that define the problem. There are a number of questions involved in the debate over bilingual education: transitional v. maintenance, mandatory v. voluntary programs, the proper role of the federal government, funding responsibilities, etc. We concluded that there were two main language needs on the high school level: (1) to teach English efficiently and effectively, and (2) to foster bilingualism and biliteracy insofar as possible, especially in those who are already bilingual when they enter school. Our recommendations address these needs. It should be noted that we did not approach this problem by suggesting a national language policy; that issue is more complex and requires further study. Our only goal was to introduce a different approach to a high school education issue, an approach informed by principles that could have widespread public support in contemporary American society.

The Commission limited its study to inner-city public schools in the continental United States. Its findings, therefore, do not relate to high schools in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and not all the Commission's conclusions may be relevant to the educational condition of rural, migrant, suburban, or middle- and upper-class Hispanics.

The Commission recognizes that some, though not all, of its findings may also apply to the life situations and educational needs of other inner-city minority, immigrant, or migrant students and their families, who also confront poverty, discrimination, and cultural isolation.

The Commission is convinced that the problems many Hispanic students experience in high school are rooted in the elementary school years. We believe that reforms on the elementary and early secondary levels are essential, and we urge policymakers to continue to focus attention on the improvement of these schools.

The report is organized in two volumes. Volume I offers a straight-forward account of what we found and what we believe can be done to improve the education of inner-city Hispanics. Volume II contains backup research and essays keyed to the findings of Volume I. For those who may wish to make additional analyses, HPDP also is making available, on Apple and IBM computer diskettes, the data the Commission extracted from the "High School and Beyond" survey.

The Commission Co-Chairs and HPDP deeply appreciate the time, effort, and dedication which the prestigious members of this Commission devoted to field visits, research, and deliberation. We are indebted to our hard-working, tireless staff, to the experts who provided us with their wisdom, and most of all to the parents, students, and teachers who shared with us their hopes, their fears, and their aspirations for a better future. This report is dedicated to them, and to the memory of Dr. Tomás Rivera who served loyally on this Commission and who dedicated his life as an educator to Hispanic youth.

Summary: Findings and Recommendations

I. ***Finding:***

Personal attention, contact with adults, and family involvement with schools improve the performance and retention of Hispanic students.

- Hispanic students almost unanimously identified "someone caring" as the most important factor in academic success.
- Hispanic students are frightened by the anonymity of the large inner-city school and want more daily adult contact.
- Many parents feel that schools do not take the time or make the effort to communicate with them.

Recommendation:

Hispanic students must have more sustained personal attention and more daily contact with adults. Their families must be welcome in their schools.

- More Hispanic adults must be present in the school.
- Specific programs must be designed to increase students' access to adults.
- The number of guidance counselors must be increased and their sensitivity to the Hispanic condition must be raised.
- Large schools should be broken up into smaller units.
- The schools must reach out to the parents of Hispanic students and involve them in their children's education.

II. ***Finding:***

The effectiveness of schools is improved when schools, parents, and students work together to define needs and develop programs. This is particularly important when the school serves a significant number of troubled students and their families.

- Students cannot leave their life situations at the door when they enter their school buildings.
- Hispanic students feel they could improve their academic performance if they had help in coping with the personal stress and family stress that arise from the poverty, violence, and isolation of inner-city life.
- The most successful schools for Hispanics—across the country—are those that have strong, enduring links to the communities they serve.

Recommendation:

Parents, students, and school officials must work together to define critical student and family needs. The programs they develop must work both through the schools and through the community to reach students and families who need help.

- Schools must take the initiative to reach out and build networks and links to the communities they serve.
- Schools must coordinate their programs with those that are sponsored by other responsible agencies and institutions in the community.
- Schools must involve the students and their families in the development of internal programs designed to assist troubled students.
- Clearly defined program goals and accountability systems that promote effective, comprehensive service should be integral parts of all service networks.

III. ***Finding:***

The curriculum crisis in American secondary schooling that affects all American youth is doubly severe for Hispanics.

- Seventy-six percent of the Hispanics who took the "High School and Beyond" achievement tests scored in the bottom half of the national test results.
- In many schools academic expectations for Hispanic students are low.
- Thirty-five percent of Hispanic students are in the vocational education track. The majority of them are not in schools that provide state-of-the-art training.
- Forty percent of Hispanic students are in a general education track as opposed to a strong academic course of study.
- Hispanic students report that their academic choices were made with little assistance from school counselors.

Recommendation:

Greater emphasis must be placed on academic content and student achievement.

- Accreditation standards must be changed to take into account actual student achievement, including dropout rates.
- Effective, successful schools should be recognized and rewarded.
- The status of Hispanic secondary education

should be monitored regularly by state departments of education.
- Discriminatory tracking practices must be eliminated.
- A core curriculum with clearly defined academic content must be established for *all* students.
- Excellence must be a national goal and all students should be assisted to achieve steady improvement in the core curriculum at their levels of competency.
- Emphasis should be placed on the development of analytic skills and a broad understanding of cultural and historic circumstances.

IV. ***Finding:***
Work experience directly affects the performance and retention, higher education and career options, and employability of Hispanic students.
- Part-time employment tends to keep students in school, to maintain or improve grades, and to introduce them to the world of real work and to career options.
- Most successful work-study programs involve the business community.
- Hispanic males are more likely than Anglo or Black males to hold full-time jobs while attending school. Forty-one percent of Hispanic males and 23 percent of Hispanic females leave high school for financial reasons.
- Over 40 percent of all Hispanic students who leave school do so *before* entering high school.
- Few Hispanics who drop out ever return to school and even fewer ever enter college.
- Students who drop out of school must accept entry-level jobs with little security and few opportunities for advancement.

Recommendation:
Work and school should be linked as early as junior high school.
- The business community and schools must work together in designing part-time and summer strategies which link school and work.
- Local Private Industry Councils and other job training funders should become involved in developing and funding work projects for in-school youth.
- Youth legislation should be considered which would subsidize jobs at minimum wage for youths who are still in school.

V. ***Finding:***
The Commission found solid evidence that Hispanics recognize the importance of the English language.
- Hispanics recognize that English is the primary language of this nation.
- Hispanic students and parents want to learn English.
- Hispanic parents, like most other parents, feel that schools have not been effective in teaching sound English language skills.
- Strategies designed to improve the English proficiency of students who already speak English differ from those designed to teach English to non-English speaking students.

Recommendation:
English must be taught more effectively to Hispanics.
- Supplemental programs should be offered to improve the reading, writing, and speaking skills of Hispanic students who are native English speakers.
- Non-English speaking high school students should be offered a variety of programs so that they may benefit from subject content instruction while they acquire a command of English as rapidly as possible. These programs include:
  - —Intensive English as a Second Language classes.
  - —Provision of core curriculum classes in Spanish if the number of non-English speaking students makes this option practical, or, at a minimum, provision of classroom materials in Spanish in conjunction with Spanish speaking tutors.
  - —Auditing of content classes taught in English.
- Seventeen and 18-year-olds who arrive in the United States late in their junior or senior years should be permitted to take graduation examinations in their native language, as well as tests in English graded on the basis of how long they have been enrolled in English classes.

VI. ***Finding:***
The Spanish language is not fostered as a valuable resource for the Hispanic student, for our schools, and for our nation.
- In many regions of the nation, Anglo and Hispanic political and business leaders testified that their banking, tourism, and service sectors need large numbers of employees who are literate in both Spanish and English.

- In certain parts of the nation, Hispanics who are bi-literate can find higher paying jobs.
- Only 4 percent of Hispanic high school students take three or more years of Spanish.
- Schools' acceptance of the Spanish language would increase the Hispanic students' sense of self-respect and self-esteem. Strong self-esteem alleviates the pressure of culture clash and helps preserve and foster the Hispanic traditional family values.

Recommendation:

Students, the community, and the nation must learn to appreciate the value of the Spanish language.

- Hispanic students—and non-Hispanic students as well—not literate in Spanish should be encouraged to take courses in the Spanish language.
- The methodologies for teaching Spanish should be improved for both native speakers and non-native speakers.
- Schools should recruit and train native Spanish-speaking teachers to help raise oral proficiency in the Spanish language.

VII. ***Finding:***

The federal government's diminished role in offering direct support to school districts has adversely affected low-income students and those who do not speak English.

- When cities and metropolitan areas have multiple independent school districts within their boundaries, the tax bases of the inner-city districts are often insufficient to meet the needs of their low-income student bodies.
- Many states already have or are in the process of developing plans which will result in more equitable school financing within their states.
- *But* the federal cutbacks and formulae for distributing block grants reduced federal support for inner-city schools by 21 percent between 1980 and 1982.

Recommendation:

The federal government must maintain ongoing support of and involvement in the following programs that have significant impact on inner-city youth:

- Creation of national longitudinal studies of junior and senior high school students so that educational performance can be tracked and analyzed.
- Publication and dissemination of education data and analyses.
- Resumption of separate funding for innovative school desegregation efforts.
- Funding for programs (Upward Bound and other TRIO programs) that create opportunities for encouraging and assisting low-income high school students.
- Renewal of the targeting of funds for vocational training programs and for limited-English-proficient students in the federal Vocational Education Act.
- Funding for Title VII and appropriation of funds to assist secondary schools to improve their English and foreign language training.

The Background

The Background

The Hispanic Reality

"...as young adults and children we have a lot of pressure... when we see the statistics and we see what it may be like for you in the future, it scares you, you know, and you think, can I really make it out in the world?"

—Hispanic student

Hispanic students bring a very special background to their classrooms. In order to understand it,* one must consider the following:

- The age of the Hispanic population.
- The origins of Hispanics.
- The geographic distribution of Hispanics.
- The economic status of Hispanics.

Age

Hispanics are the youngest and fastest growing population in the nation. Almost a third are under the age of 15 and two-thirds are under the age of 34.[7] Because so many Hispanic women are in or entering their child-bearing years, and because Hispanic women tend to bear more children at a younger age than non-Hispanics, the Hispanic population will be young for some time, while the rest of the U.S. population will continue to age.[8] The birthrate and immigration rate together account for this rapid growth. It is estimated that by the year 2000, the Hispanic population will range from 25 to 30 million,[9] or about 11 percent of the total population.

This means that in cities with heavy concentrations of Hispanics, they will be a creative force in art, science, and government, an integral part of the fabric of our society and the future work force available to business and industry. They will be the core of their communities.

Origins

It is generally not recognized that Hispanics have shared in the development of this nation since its inception. The first European settlers within what is now the continental United States were Hispanics. The Spanish-speaking cities of Sante Fe, New Mexico; El Paso, Texas; and St. Augustine, Florida, pre-date the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock. It was Spaniards who laid the foundations of the agricultural, mining, and cattle industries in the Southwest. They, and later the population of the island of Puerto Rico, were included within the United States by treaties signed between Mexico and the United States and between the United States and Spain. The individuals in these affected territories, as well as their descendants, cannot be viewed as immigrants.

After the Mexican American and Spanish America Wars, an on-going northern movement of Mexicans,

*Profiles of the Hispanic subgroups can be found in Volume II.

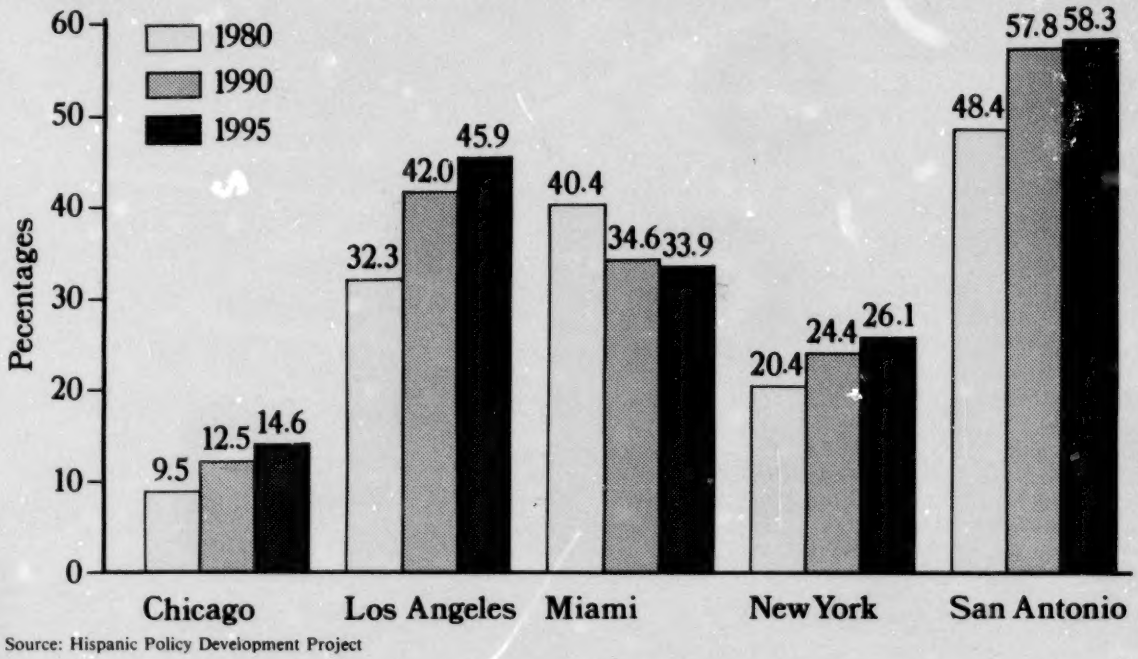
National High School Demographics

Because of demographic changes in the national population, we are now experiencing an annual decline in the number of high school graduates. In 1982, about 3.1 million high school students graduated. It is projected that 2.3 million students will graduate in 1992—a 26-percent decrease.[5]

During this same period the number of *potential* Hispanic high school graduates per year should remain constant at a third of a million. However, the Hispanic percentage of the total number of graduates could increase from the current rate of about 6 percent to 15 percent. This latter figure assumes no dramatic fluctuations in the current rate of immigration. It does assume a dramatic increase in the percentage of Hispanics graduating from high school, from 55 percent to 80 percent.

These national projections miss the even greater increases in the Hispanic high school population that will take place in most regions of the nation with high concentrations of Hispanics. The chart below illustrates the trend in five key metropolitan areas.[6]

Hispanic Percentage, Total 15 to 19-year-old Population, Five Cities: 1980, 1990, and 1995

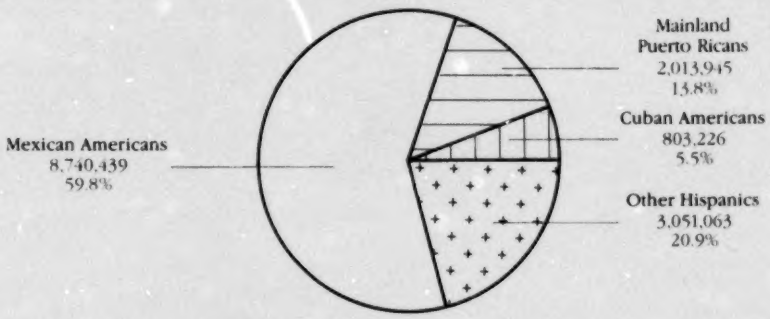


Source: Hispanic Policy Development Project

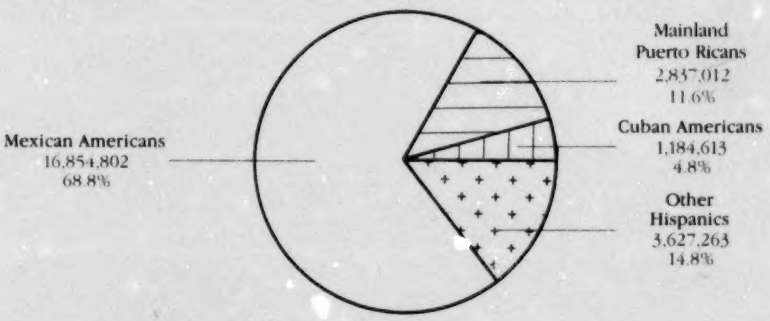
Puerto Ricans, and other Latin Americans seeking employment or refuge took place, a consequence of political and economic events in Mexico, Latin America, and the Caribbean Basin. The flow has increased markedly over the last quarter of a century.

Today 60 percent of the Hispanic adults residing on the U.S. mainland were born outside the continental United States,[10] while an estimated 80 percent of the Hispanic children attending public schools were born in the United States. Though united by a common Spanish culture, in which their basic attitudes and values were formed, and by Spanish language and religion, there are differences among these Hispanics attributable to national origins—Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central American, and South American countries. Differences also arise in social class origin and education status, and by the time and circumstances of the Hispanics' arrival in the United States. These differences *must* be appreciated and taken into account.

Composition of U.S. Hispanic Population, 1980



Composition of U.S. Hispanic Population, 1990



Source: CTI projections of 1970 and 1980 Census data drawn from Supplementary Report, "Persons of Spanish Ancestry" and Census Report PC80-S1-7.

Geographic Distribution

Hispanics are highly urbanized. The 1980 U.S. Census shows that 85 percent live in metropolitan areas. About 70 percent reside in Texas, California, and the metropolitan areas of New York, Miami, and Chicago, although there are significant Hispanic populations in such places as Oregon, Georgia, Michigan, and Louisiana.[11]

Mexican-Americans reside primarily in the West Coast, Southwest, and Midwest regions. Puerto Ricans live in the Midwest and in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic corridor. Cubans are primarily clustered in Florida. Others have settled throughout the country with heavy concentrations in New York, California, and the Mid-Atlantic states.[12]

Economic Status

While many Hispanics have found success in rewarding jobs and professions, a disproportionate number remain poor. In 1983, 28.4 percent of all Hispanics fell below the official poverty line, down slightly from 29.9 percent in 1982. These rates are almost two and a half times the rate for Anglos. The poverty rate for Hispanics under 18 in 1983 was 38.2 percent, compared to 17.3 percent for Anglos.[13] In 1982, the median family income for Hispanics was $16,228, while for Anglos it was $24,603.[14] Hispanic unemployment is from 40 to 50 percent higher than the national rate and it is particularly acute among Puerto Ricans. Employment pictures differ by region but in most areas Hispanics are also underemployed. They are likely to be working intermittently, to accept part-time work when they would prefer full-time work, and to hold marginal jobs. Hispanic women especially experience severe employment problems in many regions.[15]

Despite this grim picture, the overall Hispanic consumer market totals $70 billion. An article in the March 10, 1984, *New York Times* estimates that since Hispanics are growing at six times the national average, the Hispanic market will reach $140 billion by 1990. Hispanics make significant contributions to the nation as wage earners and consumers, a fact increasingly recognized by advertising and marketing professionals. But they are far more than a market. They are, indeed, a vital and regenerating force in American society.

However, the high rates of urban poverty and unemployment mean that large numbers of Hispanics live in segregated and deteriorating inner-city neighborhoods. In this environment, despair is the most frequent cause of drug abuse, alcoholism, family violence, and desertion. It is a tribute to the strength of Hispanic traditional family values that so many individuals survive, but the stress that results from the marginal quality of life in the inner city has a direct effect on how Hispanic children perform in school.

"...the number of students who are walking that very delicate tight-rope of being able to cope with the pressures that they are under is extraordinary. It is amazing how well they do given the pressure, but if we don't face that, I don't think we are going to make much of a difference even if we improve the quality of instruction..."

—Chief Administrator of a Metropolitan School System

The Reality of Hispanic Education

"...the higher the percentage of Hispanic students in a school system, the lower the amount of money which is available for education... the (tax) yield is so meager that they cannot afford equal educational opportunity...while money does not guarantee a good educational program, I assure you that without money it is very difficult to implement an educational program..."

—Hispanic Educator

Although circumstances differ by region and even within regions, the National Commission on Secondary Schooling for Hispanics found that the following facts describe the education of inner-city Hispanic high school students:

- In most urban centers, the press and others report alarming Hispanic drop-out rates; New York, 80 percent;[16] Miami, 32 percent;[17] Los Angeles, 50 percent;[18] San Antonio, 23 percent;[19] Chicago, 70 percent.[20]
- Conditions vary greatly, but often the schools Hispanics attend are over-crowded, poorly equipped, and have lower per-pupil budgets than other schools in their areas. This means that the students most in need have access to the lowest level of service and often are taught by the most inexperienced teachers.
- The low educational status of inner-city Hispanic parents undoubtedly bears on performances in school and directly affects Hispanic young people's decisions about staying in school.[21] (Generally, children of better educated parents with higher incomes are more successful in school than the children of poor, uneducated parents.)
- Hispanics are often over-age for their grade levels because of language problems in earlier years.[22] As a result, almost 25 percent of all Hispanics enter high school over-age.[23] Many have poor marks.[24] Some are attracted to the world of work. All these factors contribute to the unusually high Hispanic drop-out rates.
- In 1980, Hispanic male students were more likely than Anglo or Black male students to hold full-time jobs, and they averaged more hours of work per week while attending school. Of Hispanic males in the 1980 high school sophomore class who left school before graduation, more than 25 percent left to accept an offer of work. Many of these students left school in order to contribute to the support of their families.[25]
- Over two-thirds of all Hispanics now attend schools where over 50 percent of the students are minorities.[26] As a result of housing patterns and the growth of the Hispanic youth population relative to Anglo youth, this trend toward segregation is unlikely to change in the near future.
- Because of their geographic concentration, *Hispanics, over the next two decades, will become the majority of the school population and the majority of the work force in many areas of the nation.* In these regions, the future and prosperity of business, industry, and the community generally will in fact be linked to the fate of Hispanics.
- The negative stereotyping that colors uninformed non-Hispanic opinions of Hispanics tends to affect some young Hispanics' views of themselves. What they hear and see in the media and the feedback they receive from some adults leads them to believe that striving isn't worth the effort.
- Many secondary school systems were unprepared to handle the influx of Hispanic children who arrived between 1950 and 1980. Hispanic professionals were not in place to relate to the growing Hispanic student bodies and to assist non-Hispanic professionals in understanding the background, needs, attitudes, and aspirations of Hispanic children and their families.[27] Too often suspicion and alienation flourished for sheer lack of information, a tragic occurrence in institutions dedicated to learning. Some teachers felt, and some continue to feel, threatened by the students. As a result, some schools expect little from the youth but trouble. And the students respond predictably, with failure or misbehavior. Some students who leave these schools believe they are pushed out by what they perceive to be neglect or lack of caring.
- Many Hispanic students are not in strong academic programs. They are clustered in what are called general or vocational education programs.[28] The courses they take are not consistent with the high aspirations they report when they enter school.
- Between 1976 and 1983, Mexican American combined SAT scores increased an average of 11

points, from 781 to 792. Puerto Rican scores decreased an average of 4 points, from 765 to 761. Black scores increased 22 points, from 686 to 708, and Anglo scores decreased 17 points from 944 to 927. While the percentages of Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans taking the SATs have increased

"...the usual method of dealing with problems is to either push you out or invite you to go to continuation school... They become the refuse of the school system and they end up pushed into lives of crime, violence and alcoholism. And the push-out mentality is very easy to impress on young people...when you go to large schools with really no communication between teachers and students..."

—Hispanic lawyer

dramatically in recent years, still only 7 percent of all Mexican American 18-year-olds and 16 percent of all Puerto Rican 18-year-olds took the SATs in 1983, compared to 24 percent for all students.[29]

- The rate of Hispanic high school graduates who enrolled in college following graduation was 43 percent in 1982 compared to 46 percent in 1972. The White rate was 52 percent in 1982.[30]
- The majority of Hispanics attend community colleges where the chance of transferring to a four-year college is poor and the completion rate is low.[31]
- Full documentation for the 1980s is not available, but colleges report that Hispanic enrollment is down as a result of reductions in student aid.
- Of those who entered college in 1972, only 13 percent of the Hispanics, compared to 34 percent of the Anglos, had completed their baccalaureates by 1976.[32]
- Of the Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans who enter graduate or professional schools, 52 percent drop out before completing their degrees. The comparable rate for Anglos is 41 percent.[33]
- In 1981, 38 percent of the master degrees and 29 percent of the doctoral degrees that Hispanics earned were awarded in the field of education.[34]
- Thirty-nine percent of Hispanic students in the 1980 sophomore class, including those whose dominant or only language was English, were enrolled in supplemental reading and writing classes. Thirty-five percent of the entire 1980 sophomore class was in remedial classes as well. The nation clearly has a serious problem in teaching English to all its students.[35]
- The majority of Hispanic students are not literate in the Spanish language, and on their own do not elect to study it in high school.[36] (This does not apply to most youths who are recent immigrants.)
- Ratios of guidance counselors to students are as high as 1:700, even though the recommended ratio is 1:250,[37] and some schools with predominantly Hispanic student bodies do not have counselors who speak Spanish. Parents who are young, poor, uneducated, frequently foreign born, and with scant knowledge of English, have a difficult time guiding their children through the unfamiliar curricular choices. High schools lack sufficient numbers of counselors to respond to students in general, but clearly the numbers are inadequate to aid children who have nowhere else to turn for help.

Many Hispanic children are beset by the stresses of the inner city. They are surrounded by poverty but continually exposed by television to the good life that seems forever beyond their grasp. They live with violence, in overcrowded housing, and their communities usually lack adequate recreational facilities. Unstable family employment and income, plus the nature of some substandard housing which is often condemned or burned out, means that Hispanic students move frequently and can be enrolled in a number of different schools over the course of their high school careers.

Data is not available, but the Commission noted that a number of Hispanic students, particularly those who are foreign born, are separated from their parents and are in the care of older siblings, aunts and uncles, or family friends. In addition to these pressures, Hispanic youths are often called upon to make basic decisions for their families regarding matters such as welfare and medical care, because their knowledge of English is usually better than that of their parents. Significant numbers of Hispanic youths do not elect to drop out of school nor are they pushed out. They simply sink under the weight of burdens young shoulders are not strong enough to bear.

"...but I lost a few friends on the road. And it gets to me because what was different between them and I? I am doing pretty well, I guess...and they are doing so bad. And it gets me depressed..."

—Hispanic student

Findings and Recommendations

Findings and Recommendations

The Commission's review of research, our analysis of data, our discussions in the cities with individuals and experts on a wide range of subjects related to school and employment, and *most important, the successful programs we have seen and heard about*, have led us to some basic conclusions about how inner-city Hispanic students can be helped to do better in public high schools.

We believe curriculum changes alone will not solve the problems of minority students at risk. If these young people are to meet the higher standards we all support in principle, then schools must adapt and respond to the life situations of the students. If we plunge into higher standards without careful consideration of strategies that will assure that *all* young people have a reasonable chance of achieving their potentials, then we, as a society, will have condemned a major segment of our youth to failure and to an underclass.

Schools and educational systems do not function well when they are isolated from the communities they serve. Historically they were not isolated, and in a large portion of the nation they still are not. But in the big inner cities where we find the bulk of poor Hispanics and Blacks, the schools, like almost all other bureaucracies, tend to become big, anonymous, and inward looking. It is a curious phenomenon: that in a large city, the sectors of society that are crucially dependent upon each other—schools, business, and community—tend over time to view each other with suspicion.

In preparing its recommendations, the Commission has considered:

- The circumstances, needs and aspirations of Hispanic parents and children;
- The national mandate for excellence and equity; and
- The necessity of bringing inner-city schools closer to the overall communities they serve.

We have concentrated on two groups of findings and recommendations, those that relate to outreach and cooperative endeavors on the part of schools and other sectors of society, and those that more specifically relate to the internal structure, organization, curriculum, and especially the culture of schools. The Commission did not attempt to untangle the full complex of internal and external factors that bear on student achievement. Many have been addressed in the reports of others. We have focused on seven findings which we feel affect significantly the high school achievement, access to higher education, career options, and future employability of Hispanics.

The Commission recognizes that communication skills in English and Spanish are important, and we have made strong recommendations calling for improvements in the teaching of both Spanish and English. However, we caution educators against focusing on language to the exclusion of other skills and experiences. Language is not the only important issue for Hispanics, nor is there some unusual and exclusive strategy that can remedy the problems Hispanic youths confront. Every child is special and unique, but overall, children have the same basic needs. They need to master subject content. They need to develop analytical and abstract thinking skills. They need to learn good work habits. They need to feel that people care about them, they need to feel that they belong, and, most important, they need to feel good about themselves so that they can experience the joy and satisfaction of achievement. The Commission recommends to school planners and policymakers that they examine all aspects of their programs to ensure that Hispanic youth are included in every area of the schools' academic and social life.

"Caring" and The School as a Member of the Community

"I was fortunate enough to have a teacher that really cared and emphasized...getting that education that we need to survive in this world. And it has given me new hope..."

—Hispanic student

Personal attention, contact with adults, and family involvement with schools improve the performance of Hispanic students. Effectiveness of schools is improved when schools, parents, and students work together to define needs and develop programs to help troubled students and their families.

When a society goes through a radical social change such as the one we are now experiencing, tremendous public pressure is placed upon its educational institutions to keep up, respond, and restore equilibrium. In truth, in moments of social upheaval educators are as confused, baffled, and "out-of-sync" as most other adult citizens. There is legitimacy to their lament that they cannot be expected to do everything. Indeed, the matters we are demanding that schools "fix" or compensate for are of a very serious and challenging nature.

Across all segments of society, Hispanic, Anglo, and Black, we are facing major realignments in family relationships, spiraling divorce rates, and increases in the number of single-parent families and families with two working parents. For example, 55 percent of Puerto Rican children live in single-parent, overwhelmingly female-headed households.[38] Increasing numbers of unsupervised children contribute to teenage drug abuse, alcoholism, and pregnancy. In addition, we are confronting high unemployment at the same time that we face reductions in welfare benefits. Job markets are shifting geographically and changing structurally, and the populations of many inner-city neighborhoods are undergoing rapid ethnic and racial transformations. What can be done to motivate inner-city young people to strive and study hard in school when their role models of success are often on the street? What will build the sense of self-esteem necessary for achievement when the mirror of their daily environment reflects so negative an image? And what can be done to get school personnel to see, respect, and develop the potential in these beleaguered young persons?

Clearly schools cannot do everything, nor should they be called upon to do so. On the other hand, educational institutions cannot ignore the well-being of their students while they search for the perfect curriculum and the perfect organizational plan. Schools, as structured institutions with staffs and budgets, are in a pivotal position to reach out to families and communities and to put in place the formal and informal mechanisms that can—

- Establish clearly stated high-school goals widely shared by teachers, students, administrators, and parents;
- Create an atmosphere of mutual respect and dignity among schools, parents, and communities;
- Identify the different kinds and levels of student needs that may directly or indirectly affect school performance; and
- Identify those parental needs and concerns that affect student performance.

Across the country we found that the most successful schools for Hispanics were those that had strong enduring links to the communities they served and that encouraged—indeed required—that parents become partners in teaching and learning. These schools had strong, dedicated principals who created an atmosphere of high expectations for teachers and students. These were the schools that also had a number of Hispanic teachers and larger numbers of Hispanic adults in guidance, mentoring, and supervisory roles. They had close connections with the social service, health, and recreational programs that serve their students and their families. In many instances, these outside programs, such as ASPIRA[39] and the LULAC Educational Service Centers,[40] had been brought into the schools. In other cases the service programs and the schools had worked out effective referral and feedback systems. These schools, in short, had created that special culture of caring that John Goodlad—after years of close observation—con-

cluded was the factor that really mattered.[41] We found the same story everywhere we went: Students attributed their success in these schools to a quality of "caring."

> **"...I got pregnant and I thought I'd never be anybody but I came here and the teachers and the kids gave me love and I know I'll make it..."**
>
> ***—Hispanic student***

> **"...teachers lean on us and get on our case but we know they care about us..."**
>
> ***—Hispanic student***

Conversely, the commissioners found that the least successful schools were those that left their students feeling alienated, unchallenged, and unappreciated, and their families feeling unrecognized and irrelevant to the education of their children. Over and over again parents expressed how unwelcome the schools made them feel. They described their frustration and feelings of inadequacy when they tried and failed to communicate or perceived that they had been rejected.

> **"...We feel we are discriminated against... We as parents are not welcome or even allowed access to the school. They say if we cannot speak English, there is no point in wanting to see the principal or counselors...."**
>
> ***—Hispanic parent***

> **"...We want what others have, help that is realistic...We know some parents are careless, but we have a lot who do care..."**
>
> ***—Hispanic parent***

Students and parents alike were clear that "caring" was not a characteristic unique to Hispanic teachers, counselors, or administrators. In fact most felt that having positive experiences with both Hispanic and non-Hispanic staff helped young people overcome their reluctance to experience life outside their barrios. The relative absence of Hispanic staff, on the other hand, perpetuated a "we" and "they" perception of the world, in which those in charge are "they" and "we" are inferior. In such schools are found greater disciplinary problems, gangs, and a high incidence of violence. When students feel anonymous and believe that the culture around them is unaccepting, they create a culture of their own to provide themselves with a sense of belonging.

> **"...students that don't succeed are the ones that don't have the sense of belonging to the educational system..."**
>
> ***—Hispanic teacher***

The Commissioners were impressed with the effective Hispanic leadership which is becoming ever more visible in schools and communities. In all the cities we visited, Hispanics were becoming more actively involved in education issues and were prepared to cooperate with the schools. The dramatic increase in Hispanic voter registration and the growing impact of Hispanics on elections clearly indicate that Hispanics are fulfilling their obligation as responsible citizens and concerned members of society. And that spirit of self-help is something from which school personnel can draw hope and energy.

"Caring": Recommendations

The National Commission on Secondary Schooling for Hispanics recommends that schools take steps to increase students' opportunities within the school setting to develop the close supportive relationships with adults that are central to their academic and social well-being, and that in addition schools make every effort to welcome parents. We urge schools to act upon the following suggestions:

- The number of in-school guidance counselors is totally inadequate and should be increased to provide more sustained personal attention to students and their parents.
- High school counselors should establish links with elementary and middle schools so that Hispanic students and their parents are made aware of career options and the academic requirements that relate to them before the students enter high school.

- The organization of large schools should be more flexible to increase the students' sense of belonging and the opportunity to learn. Student bodies over 2,000 create an atmosphere of anonymity.[42] Some models for creating more flexible learning environments include schools within schools, "mini-schools," magnet schools, learning centers, and cooperative education.
- The representation of Hispanic teachers, administrators, and counselors should be a priority. If there are insufficient numbers of credentialed individuals to fill slots, schools should seek alternative ways of increasing the number of Hispanic role models and mentors to whom students can relate in the junior and senior high school setting, while schools work to correct the balance on regular staff. The Commission learned of initiatives as diverse as the three listed below:
  —Regular lectures by Hispanic community, business, and professional leaders, or mini-courses taught by outsiders who are Hispanics.
  —Part-time employment of retired neighborhood residents to populate the halls as "grandparent monitors." Their presence, which builds on the Hispanic tradition of respect for elders, deters misbehavior and offers students an opportunity to develop relationships with concerned adults.
  —Placing in the school the community, social and recreational programs that serve students and parents, or offering those programs space in schools to provide service on a regularly scheduled basis.
- In inner-city high schools, in communities where large concentrations of families confront an array of social and economic crises, the attendance-taking function of the homeroom teacher should be expanded to include monitoring the well-being of their homeroom students and their families. An elementary school classroom teacher spends the entire school day with his or her pupils. When students leave elementary school to enter junior high school, they lose that element of stability. This loss may be a serious problem for many Hispanic students who need an adult in the school with whom they can relate closely on a daily basis.
- Hispanic parents must be made to feel welcome in the schools and the schools must take responsibility for communicating with them, in Spanish if necessary. Children's educations cannot be put on hold while their parents learn English. The schools must adapt their approaches to the schedules and life-styles of their parents. When families cannot get to the schools, the schools must reach out to them in their homes. The Commission saw encouraging examples of part-time community workers serving as excellent ambassadors for schools and families. We also observed that the establishment of family rooms in schools overcame the reluctance of many parents to involve themselves in their children's education.

The School as a Member of the Community: Recommendations

The Commission further recommends that the schools firmly take the initiative in relating their internal activities to those that are community-based. The Commission urges that school/community efforts focus on positive activities as well as on those that could be termed "rescue operations." A strong effort should be made to overcome the victim mentality that the inner-city environment promotes and perpetuates. The Commission recommends that schools and communities build on successful models which have included the following kinds of outreach efforts:

- Parent-Student-School Advisory Committees convened to identify the critical areas of student and family need in their communities and to discuss an agenda of in-school and community-based strategies to meet those needs. Here are some of the programs that community committees have included in their agendas:
  —The provision of specific social, health, employment, and recreational services in the school building.
  —The organization of in-school or community-based peer support groups for parents and students who may be confronting family problems:
  -Drug abuse
  -Teenage parenthood
  -Child abuse or other forms of family violence
  -Alcoholism
  -Depression
  -Divorce
  —The organization of volunteer service opportunities in the community and in the school in which students may become involved during the evenings, on weekends, or over the summer. Poor students who have lived segregated, marginal lives, often on welfare, have little op-

portunity to offer service outside their homes, and thus to develop a sense of obligation to society.

—The scheduling of special classes in schools for parents—in subjects as diverse as nutrition, banking, English, how to fill out income tax forms, budgeting and installment buying, preventive health care, etc.—during the day and at night as well. The presence of Hispanic adults in the school building helps break down barriers between school and community, and when parents and students are both attending classes, learning is endowed with greater dignity.

—Organization of an annual award system to recognize the outstanding achievements and contributions of students, school personnel, and community leaders to the improvement of education and the betterment of the neighborhood.

All in-school and community-based guidance and support programs for students and parents that become part of the networks described above have clearly defined goals and performance standards. They are regularly evaluated and held accountable for their performance. The programs emphasize comprehensive rather than fragmented approaches; seriously troubled children and families do not need to see their problems dissected into their component parts. The "Cities-in-Schools" program,[43] operating in Atlanta, New York, and other cities, is one outstanding example of how schools and social service agencies can collaborate and cooperate.

Members of the National Commission on Secondary Schooling for Hispanics personally saw several promising models of close school/community cooperation and learned of several more. We were impressed with the effective Hispanic community leadership. When schools reach out, responsive and concerned hands await their clasp. But in some places, given limited budgets, state and local credentialing requirements, and local personnel practices and contract arrangements, we detected a level of hopelessness and resignation regarding what could be done to adapt the complex public and private helping bureaucracies to the needs of students and their families. The Commission recommends, therefore:

- The federal government or private foundations should sponsor a small panel of recognized experts to work with two or three concerned inner-city school districts to explore and negotiate with those concerned the innovative ways to achieve flexibility within the constraints of the education and social service systems.

The Commission recognizes that many of the recommendations made in this section expand the responsibilities of the schools and create an obvious need for additional personnel. In some states, redressing the existing inequities of school financing may produce a good part of the necessary funding. However, the Commission believes that federal subsidies will be required and it recommends:

- Legislation to augment the budgets of inner-city high schools should be enacted to cover the extra costs involved in meeting the educational needs of low-income and educationally disadvantaged students. (Despite the name of the defunct Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, less than 10 percent of Title I funding went to secondary schools.)

"What You Get to Learn"

"...through elementary school and junior high I've been a puppet...memorize this... memorize that...How many teachers really taught me a system of thinking? Because I believe there is a system of thinking, you know...."

—Hispanic student

The curriculum crisis in American secondary schooling that affects all American youth is doubly severe for Hispanic students.

Although economic need and family, community, and personal stress can dramatically affect student attitude, aspirations, and achievement, *it is curriculum and teaching that are the foundation upon which schools rest.* As one student wisely told a group of commissioners—**"...what you get to learn is where it's at, man."**

The problem is that large numbers of Hispanic high school students aren't learning what they should, as evidenced by their scores on the "High School and Beyond" (HSB) standardized achievement tests and other data compiled for the U.S. National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

High School and Beyond

Sophomores in the "High School and Beyond" survey took a battery of school related achievement tests in 1980. For the most part, average Hispanic results for all the individual tests were well below national norms. The same students took the same tests in 1982; the Hispanic scores fell even further below the norm. The drop is apparent for both in-school and out-of-school youths. To illustrate how Hispanics compare to other students, in both years about 76 percent of the Hispanic students scored in the bottom half of the national results for the composite test scores.[44] Since Puerto Rican students were the lowest achieving, the Commission did a further analysis of this group. The achievement scores of the Puerto Ricans fell well below the national average, but on measures that test *ability*, these students score about the same as everybody else.[45] We have, then, a disturbing mismatch between potential and performance.

National Center for Education Statistics

The National Center for Education Statistics has substantiated the concern of the National Commission on Excellence in Education that high school students take insufficient course work in English, mathematics, science, social studies, computer science, and foreign languages. NCES staff found that although Hispanics and Anglos in 1982 took about the same number of overall courses (credits) in high school as had previous classes, both groups took fewer courses in the basic subjects listed above. All groups, except for Asians, took fewer academic courses each year they remained in high school. *By the senior year, Hispanics took the least number of academic courses of any group.*[46]

It may well be, then, that one central reason Hispanics have not done well on standardized tests such as those used by the "High School and Beyond" study is that they have not been taking enough of the basic academic courses. The question, of course, is why not?

Tracking

Since the late 1960s, secondary school curricula have been diluted in substance and diffused in purpose for most students. Much of the change can be attributed to the rise of the general program track during these years. The National Commission on Excellence in Education found that students "have migrated from vocational and college preparatory programs to general track courses in large numbers. The proportion of students taking a general program of study increased from 12 percent in 1964 to 42 percent in 1979."[47] The HSB sample indicated that 40 percent of Hispanics were in general tracks in 1980. Twenty-five percent of Hispanics were in academic programs and 35 percent in vocational programs.[48] It should be noted that the Commission found that few Hispanics were attending the top-rated vocational schools in their cities. They were enrolled in the program that did not have state-of-the-art equipment, and therefore were less likely to feed them into the better jobs after graduation.

The placement of two-thirds of the Hispanic students in vocational education and general tracks may account in part for their low level of preparation. But it also raises other questions. Why are so many in the

less effective vocational tracks and in the general tracks? Why aren't Hispanics taking more of the basic courses that are offered when the research indicates that they enter high school with high aspirations?

> **"...you look around, you see different things that go on, like gang violence... and you can tell yourself, well, that is not going to happen to me. I want to go to college..."**
>
> ***—Hispanic student***

Counseling

Lack of counseling appears to be a large part of the problem. The increase in student choice gained over the past 15 to 20 years, as a result of the reduction in course requirements and the institution of many electives, has increased the need for better counseling, especially for students whose parents have little or no formal education. Without sensitive guidance, students choose courses with no blueprint and without relation to their long-range goals. The lack of curriculum prescription has made it "critical that a professional be there to help students and parents walk through the minefield."[49] But counseling services have actually been reduced in recent years in many high schools. Some schools with predominantly Hispanic student bodies do not have Spanish-speaking counselors on staff.

Counseling is also important in monitoring and assessing student performance. When there is no early warning system for students, teachers and parents, problems can escalate beyond the point of solution or remediation.

Separate and Unequal Education

Poor Hispanic academic performance probably is also related to the high degree of *de facto* segregation of Hispanic students. School segregation among Hispanics has risen substantially since the 1960s. In 1968, 55 percent of Hispanic students were in schools with more than half minority populations; in 1980, the figure was 68 percent.[50] Segregation is almost always accompanied by inferior resources for schooling. While deteriorating and inferior school facilities, inadequate budgets, and less experienced teachers do not automatically mean an inferior education, they undoubtedly contribute to low morale not easily overcome. Nevertheless, the Commission did find schools with substandard resources in highly depressed neighborhoods which excelled in their efforts to provide an academically sound education.

Effective Schools[51]

The Commission visited schools that have raised Hispanic achievement remarkably in recent years. These are the major features that contributed to school improvement:

- *Effective School Leadership.* The principal and top school administrators were often found to be the key persons in turning a school around and in initiating and maintaining efforts to sustain school improvement. In the schools and districts we visited, these administrators were often Hispanics themselves.
- *School Order, Harmony and Purpose.* Effective administrators report that often the first step in improving a school is creating a climate of order with firm but fair discipline. Frequently, these schools appeared to us as safe havens and "bridges over troubled waters" for students who come from stressful situations. The administrators felt that the development of a strong sense of shared purpose and mission for the school among students, faculty, administrators, other personnel, parents, and community members was equally important. That process was supported by the presence of Hispanic personnel.

> **"...Success came from recruiting qualified Hispanic teachers who could communicate staff member to staff member, get a dialogue going on a positive basis, and as a result get a more wholesome attitude among the staff of the school about the education of the youngsters..."**
>
> ***—teacher***

- *Committed and Sensitive Teachers.* A harmony is evident in effective schools even when the teachers and administration are of a different socioeconomic class and ethnic background than the students and their parents. These teachers are not only committed to improving academic achievement but also to inspiring and guiding their students. The teachers also express caring for students in a number of concrete ways, and, in return, the students are willing to abide by dress codes, attendance standards, and to stay in school and extend themselves.
- *Increased Emphasis on Basic Academic Skills.* Students are challenged to improve their aca-

demic skills through extensive supplemental courses for under-achievers, reinforcement of academic skills in all subject courses, tutoring, and counseling. This emphasis is extremely important for the overwhelming numbers of Hispanic students who enter high school unprepared.

"What You Get To Learn": Recommendations

While the overall condition of secondary schooling for Hispanics remains grim, the Commission was impressed and inspired by the extraordinary efforts of some schools to improve the academic achievement of Hispanic and other students. We recommend:

- An expansion of programs for recognition of these efforts by foundations, the Federal National Diffusion Network, and corporations. Furthermore, these same institutions and networks should support incentives for the dissemination of information about effective practices and techniques to other schools.[52]

In order to sustain the improvement of school practices, we recommend:

- That states and accrediting agencies focus on the improvement of student achievement, retention, and other schooling performance factors as the basis for accreditation, in addition to the present emphasis on access to facilities, teacher certification, library books, etc. Systems of rewards and penalties should be instituted, but not systems that would promote pushing out students in order to maintain standards.
- Periodic state and national monitoring of the status of Hispanic secondary education to evaluate how well the educational needs of these students are being met. The Commission recommends that the monitoring be done by state departments of education and by a privately funded national education institution. As part of this process, it is recommended that a standard dropout definition and methodology for calculating it be adopted.

John I. Goodlad in *A Place Called School* recommends the elimination of tracking at all levels of schooling.[53] We concur, and we agree with another recent report that "the education needed for the work place does not differ in its essentials from that needed for college or advanced training."[54] An excellent general education is increasingly dictated by "the need for adaptability and lifelong learning" for both the worker and the citizen. Such an education should promote for all students an understanding of themselves and their relations with others, with society, and with nature.

In offering the following recommendations we stress the need to give administrators and teachers the flexibility to participate actively in the planning and implementation of school improvements as well as in managing their own responsibilities. In like manner, we urge schools to adopt instructional styles that allow students to be active learners through participation, deliberation, and reflection.

- The National Commission on Secondary Schooling for Hispanics favors elimination of tracking and encourages a core curriculum of four years of English, three years of mathematics, three years of science, three years of social studies, one-half year of computer science, and two years of foreign language. These courses should have clearly defined academic content and should emphasize the development of analytical skills.
- Electives beyond the basic academic courses should be considered as enrichments of the basic curriculum and should reinforce the skills acquired in the basic academic courses.
- All students need to be introduced to the world of work and should be encouraged to acquire skills while in high school, regardless of their post-secondary plans. But acquisition of vocational skills must not be a substitute for the required core curriculum. We urge that the skills be tied to the needs of business and industry and that the training be based on state-of-the-art equipment.
- Because all students should achieve mastery of the core curriculum up to their individual abilities, the Commission recommends that the learning tasks be defined and structured to make clear what is to be accomplished by the students.
- We further recommend consideration of the development of a personalized education contract for each student, now feasible with computer technology.[55] We advocate that learning tasks be paced to the student's current competencies, but we believe there should be high expectations of performance for all students related to the academic content requirements of the core curriculum.
- In order to achieve mastery of the core curriculum, we propose that extra help and more time to learn be given to the students. More time and help can

take the form of tutoring, after-school sessions, and intensive summer programs.

- The Commission recommends that academically advanced students help to teach and tutor their peers and that less academically advanced students do likewise with younger students. A recent evaluation of methodology for increasing reading and math achievement showed that peer tutoring is the most cost-effective way to provide assistance.[56]
- The Commission encourages further exploration and research on the effectiveness of the new education technologies which have been widely used in remediation programs sponsored by the military.

The Commission emphasizes that the success of all curricula and education technologies and strategies is related to sensitive teaching and guidance and genuine concern for students and their families.

Because the improvement of secondary schooling may come too late for many Hispanic students, *we believe reforms on the elementary and especially the early secondary school levels are essential.*

"...elementary level...That's where everything begins...And if you're not taught there, it's going to be hard for you to get into junior high school and harder for you to stay in high school..."

—Hispanic student

Finally, we believe that the attitudes and expectations with respect to Hispanic students must be changed. Hispanics are like all other students. They want challenges and the guidance and resources to meet those challenges. Excellence must not be an absolute standard, but *the opportunity to strive for excellence* ***must*** *be available to all and inclusive of everyone.*

Work and School

"...you need a little push. If you really want to go to college and you don't know what's going on, you need someone to tell you...if you want to do it, you can do it, but you have to know where it is..."

—Hispanic student

Work experience directly affects the performance and retention, higher education and career options, and employability of Hispanic students.

The National Commission on Secondary Schooling for Hispanics believes that inadequate attention has been paid to the stark realities that make early job experience crucial both to the future economic well-being and the educational progress of significant numbers of poor Hispanic and other low-income students.

The most compelling and straight-forward reason why schools must concentrate on the Hispanic students' need to work is the fact that 41 percent of the Hispanic males who leave school cite economic reasons—"financial difficulties," "couldn't afford to attend," "offered a good job," or "home responsibilities" —as the cause.[57]

Twenty-five percent of the females, in addition to the one-third who drop out because of marriage or pregnancy,[58] leave to go to work.

Simply put, this means that poor kids need money and want to work, and if they cannot find part-time work that provides essential income—and if they and their families perceive no advantage in their staying in school—they will leave to work full time.

Many schools have instituted work/study programs geared to eleventh and twelfth graders, and recently a surge of attention has been paid to "the transition from school to work." But the Commission believes that this

high school work experience may come too late for many Hispanic students. Forty-three percent leave school before entering the tenth grade.[59]

The eagerness of these Hispanic teenagers to work and their willingness to accept and perform in entry-level, minimum-wage jobs speaks well for their sense of responsibility and industriousness. However, those who leave school to take these jobs are locked out of higher education, out of employment options, and out of advancement opportunities. The first jobs these individuals obtain are often exactly the same as their last jobs, and over a lifetime they are susceptible to layoff

> **"...I know a lot of people who got out of school because the family needed money...they had to work...in the Hispanic home, the families pull together and the money's not always out there..."**
>
> ***—Hispanic student***

and underemployment. Long-term unemployment will lead many to "work off the books" and drive others to antisocial behavior.

Individuals, however young they may be, make life choices by considering their options. As the student quoted above told the Commission, **"...you have to know what's there."** And we would add, **"You have to know what it takes to get there."** The majority of the inner-city Hispanic young people and their families are unfamiliar with the communities outside their neighborhoods and are often reluctant to venture into unknown territory. They do not know people in the larger community and the larger community does not know them. They lack networks, they lack mentors, they lack access, and they lack exposure.[60]

The one place Hispanic youths can be found, at the precise time in their lives when they are making crucial education and employment decisions, is *junior high school.* If we are to save this generation of young people, then we must take full advantage of every available opportunity to respond to their economic needs while we broaden their career options and provide them with positive exposure to the world outside their neighborhoods.

There is no one magic answer or program that will make every poor Hispanic employable or motivate every student to consider higher education. However, two broad lessons emerge from a body of structured reliable research on work experience and successful work models for in-school youths:

- Carefully targeted and designed work programs that link the business community and education are more effective than "career education days" or make-work summer employment in introducing youths to the real world of work and to career options and the higher education requirements these may entail.
- Access and transition to the world of work and to higher education are problems that can be dealt with by building substitutes for the informal channels available to most middle-class white youths.

The research clearly shows that, apart from providing necessary income, part-time employment has significant impact on:

- Keeping students in school,
- Maintaining or raising academic performance,
- Developing good work habits and attitudes, and
- Developing transferable work place skills.

The five examples of in-school work experience briefly described below illustrate the value of combining school and work. The first three have been evaluated. The last two are innovative and promising experiments that build on past experience.

- *The Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation*, in 1978 to 1980, managed and evaluated a demonstration program in 17 major cities for 70,000 low-income in-school youths.[61] The participants applied for jobs that were conditional on continued satisfactory school performance and attendance. There were always waiting lists of young people eager for jobs, despite the fact that the jobs paid at the bottom of the scale, that no skills training was provided, and that no permanent jobs were promised. In the 17 cities, 6000 private employers provided jobs and received wage subsidies. Over 80 percent of the private employers interviewed reported that the youths' work habits, attitudes, and willingness to work were average or better than average. The follow-up on participants showed that not only did they tend to remain in school, but when they graduated, *they earned more money than high school students who had dropped out and more than those who had stayed in school but had no work experience.*
- *The Private Industry Council in San Antonio, Texas*, in collaboration with a community-based program, mounted another innovative project to give pre-employment and work-readiness training to high school juniors and seniors, most of whom were Hispanic.[62] The program brought together approximately 20 small businesses to help design curriculum and to provide part-time work sites during the summer. Workshops were provided by the San Antonio Alliance of Business, and students spent roughly 40 hours a semester in the workshops during the year. During the summer they spent half their time in the workshops and

half their time at work. Students did not receive stipends for attending workshops, but were paid wages by the companies during their summer part-time employment. The participants stayed in school and the evaluators of the program observed that they were more likely than non-participants to find jobs in the private sector after graduation. This is very important because the public sector job market that historically has absorbed large numbers of minority youth is shrinking.

- *The National Institute for Work and Learning* has issued a paper commissioned by the Hispanic Policy Development Project which reports that Hispanic students who are hourly employed in the fast-food industry feel that the jobs provide them with a positive experience,[83] despite the fact that upward mobility is limited and benefits are lacking. Two-thirds believe that the fast-food industry jobs helped them become aware of how business runs. Nine out of 10 report that the jobs helped them learn skills associated with dealing with people, and 95 percent reported that the jobs helped them learn to work with others. The vast majority feel that management treated them fairly, provided adequate supervision, kept them informed, and "don't play favorites." (It should be noted that other groups of young people have not reported similar positive experiences in fast-food.) Although the jobs were not connected to any structured in-school or out-of-school employment programs, a quarter of the Hispanics had made special scheduling arrangements with their schools in order to work in the restaurants.
- *The Corporation for Public/Private Ventures* in Philadelphia is testing, in two national sites, a redesign of the federal Summer Youth Employment Program aimed at 14-year-olds. Its purpose is to give poor youths who have failed a grade an opportunity to catch up. They take academic work during the summer but they also earn money in a summer job. Youths who perform satisfactorily in the program and engage in remedial activities during the school year get a better job the following summer. An important objective of the program is to help participants understand the relationship between school and their job aspirations and options.[84]
- *Grinker, Walker and Associates* designed a program for the New York Partnership in which businesses employ specific youths in summer jobs and part-time school-year jobs from tenth to twelfth grade as long as their job and school performances remain adequate. Youths who stay on the job and in school for a year are awarded a scholarship allowance for each remaining segment on the job/work cycles they successfully complete. The program builds a mentor relationship. It provides an incentive for students to perform well both in school and on the job and it motivates them to seriously consider college or post-secondary education or training.[85]

Work and School: Recommendations

Because so many Hispanic students leave school before they enter high school, the Commission concluded that both junior high schools and senior high schools in the inner cities must increase active interest and involvement in their students' needs and desire to work. And, because our experience and research indicate that private businesses have played an active role in almost every successful youth program, we believe that it is imperative that the business community and schools work together to design part-time and summer job strategies which link the school and the work place. The Commission recommends that these strategies employ these possibilities:

- Cooperatively operated business/school part-time employment networks, located in the schools or directly linked to the schools, that provide:
  1. Worker readiness training,
  2. Job counseling,
  3. Job placement, and
  4. Follow-up and evaluation.
- Encouragement of special scheduling arrangements to permit students to work and attend school.
- Jobs linked to school performance and attendance.
- School credit for certain kinds of work and arrangements for work supervisors to report to schools on students' job performance and vice versa.
- Transferability of credit between high school and evening General Educational Development (GED) classes for students who may need to combine day and night school if their jobs so require.
- Summer jobs that combine paid employment with

academic training—especially important for students who are behind a grade and are likely to drop out if they do not catch up.

- Arrangements that encourage employers to identify and hire students in summer and in part-time jobs over a number of years and offer scholarship assistance to those who perform successfully in school and on the job.
- Support for youth employment legislation which would partially subsidize minimum wage jobs for in-school youth in those regions of the nation hardest hit by recession and unemployment.
- Greater involvement of Private Industry Councils, beyond simple allocation of federal Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) funds, in the funding and development of in-school programs aimed at junior and senior high school students. The Private Industry Councils have not been active in addressing the needs of in-school youth, despite the fact that JTPA mandates that 8 percent of its funding be used for school/business cooperative programs in remediation and job-readiness training. We urge that these set-asides be used for partial support of the kinds of projects we have recommended above.

English—Our Primary Language

"...Why should I encourage my children to stay in school if they have been in school for two to seven years and have not learned English?...."

—Parent

The National Commission on Secondary Schooling for Hispanics found solid evidence that Hispanics recognize the importance of learning English.

When we began our inquiry, we were cognizant of the recurring impression in the national media that Hispanics are reluctant to learn English or to acknowledge the central place it holds in our economy, in our social and political system, and of course in education. In each of our site visits, and in reviewing the literature, we remained attentive to this concern and sought to determine for ourselves whether the charges had validity.

All the Commissioners are now convinced that the belief that Hispanics do not want to acquire English is unfounded and unwarranted. In every city we visited, we heard explicit Hispanic acknowledgement that English is of critical importance to their success. English is neither scorned nor threatened. Hispanics we spoke to on this subject recognize that it is the primary language of the nation. Hispanic parents are staunch supporters of solid English instruction. What they do object to are instructional approaches to learning English that deprive their children of Spanish, which often is the language of communication in their families. Parents fear that they will not be able to guide their youth and pass on their values. In addition, Hispanic parents recognize that wider employment opportunities and better paying jobs are available to individuals who are literate in both Spanish and English.

It is interesting to note that a complaint the Commissioners heard frequently was that the schools have not been effective in teaching English, and that progress in improving English language teaching methods has

been slow. This is exactly what Anglo parents say, and this universal parental concern is supported in the findings of all the recent reports on secondary education.

Our statistical data reveal the weakness very clearly. In 1980, 39 percent of all Hispanic sophomores nationwide were enrolled in remedial courses in English. They included students who spoke both English and Spanish and those who spoke only English. But about 35 percent of all the nation's sophomores were in such courses as well.[66]

English—Our Primary Language: Recommendations

Hispanic high school students have differing needs related to English instruction, depending upon how well or if they speak English.

We endorse the following education programs for high-school-age Hispanics *who are English speaking but not fully proficient in English:*

- The English proficiency of all students should be formally assessed before they go to high school. A pre-high school summer term and an intensive freshman-year supplementary program should be provided for students who are deficient in the use of English.
- Hispanic high school students should complete a basic English course with emphasis on writing, and writing should be an integral part of all subject courses.
- The high school curriculum should include a study of public speaking, the spoken word, and listening.

High school students *who do not speak English* present a different challenge. These students usually arrive in the United States with a firm base in their native language. They are not affected by the problems that beset young learners who have not yet fully mastered conceptual thinking in their first language. Therefore, methods used to teach six-year-olds may not be appropriate or applicable to teenagers. The maturity of high school students can be counted on to assist them in overcoming language barriers, and these students, like all other older students, should begin to bear some responsibility for their education. The Commission found that parents and students unanimously supported learning English the fastest way possible.

The major problem non-English speaking students experience is that of falling behind in course content while they are in the process of acquiring English competency. Moreover, those who arrive in the United States late in the junior or in their senior years have difficulty passing the examinations required for graduation when they are given in English. Not every school may be able to provide Spanish language instruction in major subjects. Sufficient numbers of teachers may not always be available everywhere they are needed. Some schools with large numbers of non-English speaking students have successfully offered certain basic courses in Spanish, but other solutions to respond to the needs of these students should also be considered.

The National Commission on Secondary Schooling for Hispanics feels that the needs of the non-English speaking high school student can best be met by a combination of the following strategies:

- Intensive English as a Second Language instruction;
- Provision of core curriculum classes in Spanish if the number of non-English speaking students makes this option practical, or, at a minimum, provision of classroom materials in Spanish in conjunction with Spanish-speaking tutors;
- Auditing selected content courses in English early on to provide maximum opportunity to adjust to the sounds and cadences of many different English speakers and eventually to begin to pick up substance and meaning; and
- An option for 17- and 18-year-olds who arrive in the United States late in their high school careers: to take graduation examinations in their first language. Additionally, those students would be required to pass an English language examination which would be graded on the basis of how long they had been enrolled in English as a Second Language classes.

Because English language proficiency is a community problem as well as a school problem, and because teaching reinforces learning, we further recommend:

- That every high school establish a volunteer corps of tutors and teaching assistants from the student body and the local community to foster English language literacy in school and in the surrounding community. Specifically, students would work with an adult-education coordinator/trainee to provide English language instruction to limited-English speaking adults, especially recent immigrants, in their communities.

Spanish—A National Resource

"...For Americans to be really successful in the coming decades, they will have to be trilingual: fluent in English, Spanish and Computer..."
—*John Naisbitt, "Megatrends"*[67]

The Spanish language is not sufficiently fostered as a valuable resource for the Hispanic student, the school, and the nation. Although many Hispanic high school students speak Spanish well, most school systems do not urge them to read or write in it. This is a grave resource loss to the nation.

The English language is vitally important in American life. For other reasons, Spanish is vitally important to the present and future life of the western hemisphere as well as the cultural and family life of many Hispanic students. The difference is one of priority: the learning of English is imperative, while the development of and improvement in the ability to speak Spanish is highly desirable.

Fifteen years ago, the English-speaking population of the western hemisphere was larger than the Spanish speaking.[68] Today those proportions are reversed.[69] In the United States alone, there are more native speakers of Spanish than there are in most countries of Latin America. This phenomenon is, in itself, neither good nor bad. It simply is.

Anglo and Hispanic political and business leaders in regions that have high concentrations of Hispanics, and/or close connections to Latin America, made it very clear to the Commission that business, banking, the service industries, and tourism need employees—from clerks to presidents—who are literate in Spanish and English. Hispanic parents noted that higher paying jobs were available to their children if they were literate in both Spanish and English.[70] For schools, these facts imply a need to reassess the place that the Spanish language now holds in the traditional high school curriculum.

For the nation, Spanish represents one of the best hopes for relating more functionally and harmoniously to the countries to the South.

The Naisbitt observation that heads this section is both profound and disturbing. It is profound because it captures the full import of current demographic trends both national and hemispheric. It is disturbing because it reminds us of the terrible state of affairs in our nation's schools with respect to the teaching and learning of languages in general. Five years ago, a presidential commission lamented that our national foreign language deficiencies were "nothing short of scandalous."[71] Five years after that report was published, little has happened to improve the teaching of languages. Instead we detect a disquieting movement in society in the opposite direction, a movement which is affecting the schools. This Commission is concerned that opposition to the use of other languages may lead our nation toward dangerous divisiveness and confrontation.

Spanish—A National Resource: Recommendations

Small but important steps in heading off linguistic divisiveness can and should be taken in our nation's schools.

We should begin by acknowledging that Spanish is an important and needed resource that happens to be the first-acquired language of millions of American students. When that language is scorned, as it is by some, or when children and young people are encouraged to rid themselves of it, as they often are, full communication between children and parents is limited. When a young person's sense of identity and self-esteem are damaged, culture clash is heightened and, as a consequence, young people are less likely to accept their parents' values, guidance, and control. The weakening of the traditional Hispanic commitment to family is a grave loss for Hispanics and for the nation.

The National Commission on Secondary Schooling for Hispanics is convinced that schools can take advantage of the natural Spanish resource we have and develop higher levels of Spanish literacy in all the population. In evaluating strategies, we recommend that policymakers consider the following:

- Spanish speakers should be urged to take language courses that would make them literate in Spanish. At present, only four percent of the Hispanic high school students study three or more years of Spanish.[73]
- In states and cities with large proportions of Hispanic citizens, schools should encourage the study of Spanish. Reliable research indicates that early exposure to a language is the most effective way of developing proficiency. Therefore, the Commission recommends training teachers and drawing upon our large reserve of native speakers so that student language instruction can commence in elementary school.
- Native and non-native speakers of English have different needs with respect to language instruction. Some schools have done little to accommodate their language curricula to this reality. This inattention sometimes makes high school Spanish courses uninteresting to both native speakers and non-native learners. The Commission recommends that a national study be conducted, perhaps by the U.S. Department of Education, to examine this problem and recommend specific improvements.
- Students and other persons who are native speakers should be used as tutors and teaching assistants in high school Spanish courses at all levels. This would benefit tutors as well as students. It is our impression that foreign languages are still frequently taught on an old reading-and-writing model that does not take advantage of the rich resources our communities possess in people who speak French, Spanish, German, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, *et al.* We recommend a series of pilot projects nationwide to test the total range of innovations possible in using native speakers to improve oral fluency in Spanish and other languages. Such innovations might include exploring the benefit of using students fluent in Spanish as volunteer teaching assistants in adult language classes.

The Federal Role

"...the amount of federal aid has diminished tremendously and that which is being spent....is no longer going toward the disadvantaged and the minorities and the limited-English-proficient..."
—Hispanic educator

The federal government's diminished role in offering direct support to school districts has adversely affected low-income students and those who do not speak English.

Many of the states with large Hispanic populations recently have legislated major school improvement efforts. California, Florida, New York, and Texas have enacted major education reforms and have increased State funding from 6 percent to 17 percent.[73] Illinois is expected to massively revise its school finance system in 1985. Despite this encouraging movement on the part of the states, the federal cutbacks have adversely affected inner-city schools. This was repeatedly pointed out to the Commissioners on their visits. Overall federal spending for the education of disadvantaged children dropped 17 percent over the past three years,[74] but the amount received by inner-city school systems was off by at least 21 percent. One education advocacy group contends that the new block grants have resulted in a "massive redistribution of federal funds away from states serving large numbers of poor, non-white children toward more sparsely settled states with few minority children."[75]

There continue to be no appropriations to assist secondary schools to respond to the special needs of non-English/limited-English students.

In view of the increasing segregation of Hispanic students, the elimination of separate funding for innovative school desegregation programs, which occurred when the block grant was created, has been particularly unfortunate.

The Federal Role: Recommendations

The National Commission on Secondary Schooling for Hispanics does not recommend a complete resumption of the old categorical programs in education. However, we urge Congress to be more precise about targeting block grant money to students with special needs, because much of the funding in the block grants originally was focused upon educationally needy students. Moreover, the use of federal funds for these purposes should be better monitored by the federal government, and reasonable reporting requirements should be instituted.

In addition to youth employment legislation and legislation to benefit secondary schools, the Commission recommends:

- Continued funding for programs (Upward Bound and other TRIO programs) that create opportunities to encourage and assist low-income high school students to continue their schooling on the college level, as well as financial assistance and loan programs for low- and middle-income students;
- Renewal of the targeting of funds and vocational training programs for limited-English-proficient students in the federal Vocational Education Act;
- Funding of Title VII and authorization of funds to assist secondary schools to improve their English and foreign language training for both native English speakers and non-English speakers;
- Continued funding of research and demonstration initiatives to test the effectiveness of instructional technology, such as simulation and computer-based learning, to assist students who need intensive catch-up work, to speed up the learning process, and to make learning more attractive for all students;
- The expansion of research and data collection on Hispanic education, at both the lower and upper secondary levels;
- Renewed federal concern for school district compliance with national civil rights legislation and a program to monitor compliance; and
- Adoption of legislation to provide federal matching grants to state and local education agencies that have implemented school improvement programs based on effective schools research.[78]

School Reform for
All Our Children

School Reform for All Our Children

A society has an obligation to educate its youth. It must pass on knowledge, skills, and information. But, more importantly, it must keep alive the values and concepts upon which it rests. *The next generation is the only sure future a society has.*

The Commission applauds the current proposals which have drawn attention to the need to focus on excellence as a goal worthy of schools, teachers, and students. However, a careful analysis of the recent reports reveals that these proposals do not address the needs of students at risk. As these proposals are implemented, special strategies must be put in place to insure that inner-city Hispanic students are not left out.

A democracy such as ours is built upon the premise that human life has value, and that fairness, equity, and social mobility are central. We cannot afford to neglect, alienate, or waste the growing number of Hispanic and other young people and the magnificent resource they represent. Too many of them are leaving our high schools unaware and often suspicious of what this nation stands for.

It is undeniably true that in the past many Americans did not graduate from high school. There were jobs available for them that required little formal education, jobs where brawn was more valued than book learning. Historically, these jobs anchored the first generation of immigrants, many of whose children and grandchildren moved up the socioeconomic ladder through schooling.[77] But the nation is in the midst of a dramatic change in the nature of its job markets. The growing service and information sectors demand higher skills precisely when over a third of the Hispanic 18- to 19-year-olds lack high school diplomas,[78] when there is no sign of a decline in the rate of Hispanics who leave school before graduation, and when these youths are rapidly becoming the work force upon which the business and industry of many cities must rely. Indeed, as more Anglos reach social security age, their support will depend on social security taxes paid by our increasingly Hispanic and Black work force.

The educational success of Hispanic students, therefore, benefits society as a whole. Our educational systems must adapt to teach them, understand them, and embrace them, not only because we need them, but because *they are our children, a generation too precious to waste.*

Methodology, Notes, and References

Methodology

The National Commission on Secondary Schooling for Hispanics organized its agenda in the following manner.

It conducted a review of research on Hispanic education and made a topical analysis of the recent studies concerning American public high schools. Using this initial information as a base, the Commission then identified the following major areas of interest as a guide for its work:

- The general status and condition of schools and education in inner cities that have significant Hispanic populations.
- The factors that most directly affect the success of Hispanic youngsters in urban high schools.
- The relevance of current reform proposals to the needs of inner-city Hispanic students.

The Commission undertook two parallel efforts to reach its findings and conclusions.

I

The full Commission made field visits to inner-city schools and communities in Los Angeles, San Antonio, Miami, New York, and Chicago. Commission members met with students, parents, teachers, administrators, community leaders, educators, and business and professional leaders. Most of them are listed in the following pages; others appeared as volunteers, out of interest and concern. The discussions were wide-ranging but generally were guided by the following questions that were distributed beforehand to the participants:

1. If you could make any changes you desired to improve the high school achievement of Hispanic youngsters, what would they be?
2. What do you consider to be the most important factors in determining the success of Hispanic youngsters in high school, either inside the schools or outside the schools? The failure?
3. On the basis of your experience, how would you describe the current condition of Hispanic secondary schooling?
4. To what do you attribute the dropout problem among Hispanic youth?
5. In your view, how relevant are the proposals for school reform that you may have heard or read about to the true needs and best interests of the Hispanic student?
6. What do you believe is the best contribution that this Commission can make to these questions?

In each site, special efforts were made to learn about successful programs and strategies. The impressions of the commissioners were complemented by a topical analysis of the transcripts of the meetings.The transcripts are available for study in the HPDP offices.

II

The Commission staff made the first major descriptive analysis of the Hispanic sophomore cohort of "High School and Beyond" (HSB), a national longitudinal study of high school sophomores and seniors, compiled for the U.S. National Center for Education Statistics. "High School and Beyond" follows the progress of about 58,000 young people during high school and the critical period of transition to postsecondary education, work, and family formation. A description of "High School and Beyond" and selected analyses of the data appear in Volume II.

In addition, papers on topics of interest or concern were commissioned. Recognized authorities in specific fields were invited to make presentations to

the Commission or to engage in discussion with the Commissioners.

The findings and recommendations offered by the Commission are supported by the data, by the on-site experiences of the Commission, and by the example of successful programs.

Schedule of Events: National Commission on Secondary Schooling for Hispanics

November 6, 7, 8, 1983—**Los Angeles, California**—Full Commission Meeting, Orientation, and Deliberations, Site Visit and Meeting at Hollenbeck Junior High School. Lunch and Visits with students at Roosevelt High School. Dinner Meeting with members of business community.

December 11, 12, 18, 1983—**San Antonio, Texas**—Full Commission Meetings and Deliberations, Site Visit and Meetings with educational and community representatives at John F. Kennedy High School, Edgewood School District. Dinner Meeting with members of business community.

January 22, 23, 24, 1984—**Miami, Florida**—Full Commission Meetings and Deliberations, Site Visits and Meetings at Miami High School and Miami-Dade Community College, New World Center Campus. Luncheon meeting with members of business and education community.

February 26, 27, 28, 1984—**New York City**—Full Commission Meeting and Deliberations, Site Visit and classroom observations, Morris High School, Bronx. Meetings with various educational representatives. Dinner meeting with business community.

March 24, 25, 26, 27, 1984—**Chicago, Illinois**—Full Commission Meeting and Deliberations, Site Visits to various school and community centers for dialogue with parents, educators, and students. Presentations at Latino Institute by Latino Institute staff and other experts on education.

May 10, 11, 12, 1984—**Washington, D.C.**—Meetings and Deliberations of Full Commission.

Persons Who Appeared Before the Commission

Los Angeles

Dr. Leobardo Estrada, Professor
Graduate School of Architecture and Urban Planning
University of California at Los Angeles

Dr. Luís (Phil) Hernández, Associate Dean
California State University

Raúl Arreola, Executive Director, MAEC
Los Angeles Unified School District

Dr. Rubén Zacarias, Regional Superintendent
Los Angeles Unified School District

Eugene Mornell, Director
Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission

Lionel Martínez, Division Chief
Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission

Dr. Fernando Hernández, Associate Professor of Education
California State University
Department of Educational Foundations

Vicky Castro
Represented Mr. Rivera, Director of Public Information
Los Angeles Unified School District
Hollenbeck Junior High School

Antonio H. Rodriguez, Law Director
Center for Law and Justice

Fred Nelson, Program Officer
Atlantic-Richfield Foundation

Phillip Montez, Regional Director
U.S. Commission on Civil Rights

Ruby Aguilar
Parent Involvement Community Action-PICA

Sister Maribeth Larkin
United Neighborhood Organization

Representative from the Office of Senator Art Torres
California Senate

Sandra Macis-Solano, Immediate Past President
Association of Mexican-American Educators

Carmen Terrazas, Principal
Bell High School

Jo Bonita S. Pérez, Multicultural Education Consultant
Los Angeles County Schools
Office of the Superintendent

Mrs. Bertha Herrera
Los Angeles Parent

Zane Meckler
Los Angeles Unified School District

Manuel Orozco
Parent, Los Angeles Community

Esmeralda García
Student, Roosevelt High School

Chuck J. Acosta
Bilingual Education Consultant
Los Angeles County School

Robert Acosta
Student, Roosevelt High School

Tirzo Ruelas
Student, Roosevelt High School

Eddie Calleros
Student, Roosevelt High School

Teresa Fernández
Parent, Los Angeles Community

Ramona R. Whitney
Pupil Services Attendance Counselor
Roosevelt High School

Ms. Gloria D. Sierra, Bilingual/ESL Adviser
Senior High Schools Division
Los Angeles Unified School District

Rubén Hernández, Psychologist/Special Education
Los Angeles County Schools
Office of the Superintendent

Marcela Aguilar, Parent
Reseda, California

William Anton, Deputy Superintendent of Schools
Los Angeles Unified School District

Dr. Stuart Gothold, Superintendent
Los Angeles County Schools
Los Angeles County Education Center

Mr. Ricardo Olivarez, President
Los Angeles County Schools, Board of Education

Miss Alicia Ortega, Teacher
Hollenbeck Junior High School

Benjamin S. Lozano, Assistant Principal
Hollenbeck Junior High School

San Antonio

William C. Velásquez, Executive Director
Southwest Voter Registration and Education Project

James Vásquez, Superintendent of Schools
Edgewood School District

The Honorable Henry Cisneros, Mayor
City of San Antonio

Dr. Frank Montalvo
Ford Urban School Recognition Program

Joe Bernal, Principal
Emma Frey Elementary School

Oscar Hernández, Executive Director
Project STAY

Dr. José Cárdenas, Executive Director
Intercultural Development Research Association

Gilberto Ramon
"Options for Excellence"
The College Board
San Antonio

Ms. María del Carmen Aranda, Spanish Teacher
Memorial High School

Armando Mendoza, Social Studies Teacher
Escobar Junior High School

Ms. Rose Padilla, English Teacher
J.F. Kennedy High School

Gerald Sharp, Language Arts Teacher
Brentwood Junior High School

Ms. Stella Tenorio, Special Education Teacher
Edgewood High School

Mary Esther Bernal
San Antonio ISD Curriculum Center

Dr. Gloria Zamora, President
National Association for Bilingual Education

Ms. Lila Cockrell, Executive Director
United San Antonio
Immediate Past Mayor - San Antonio

Nick Calzoncet
Spoke to Commission about 100-percent dropout rate for Hispanics in Texas born deaf

Norma Cantú
Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund

Commission met with a group of business representatives of United San Antonio

Commission met with a group of students from John F. Kennedy High School

Miami

Ms. Ruth Shack, County Commission
Dade County Courthouse

Ms. Evelyn Dávila, Director, Urban University Study
Office of the College Board
Washington, DC

Dr. Piedad Placencia Bucholz, Area Superintendent
Dade County Public Schools
South Central Area Office

Dr. Silvia Rothfarb, Superintendent of Program Evaluation
Dade County Public Schools
Office of Educational Accountability

Jorge Fernández, Chair
Citizens' Advisory Committee of the Dade County School Board

Representative of Paul Bell, Superintendent

Ralph F. Rabinet, Director
Bilingual Foreign Language Education
Dade County Public Schools

Marisela Latimer, Acting Executive Director
ASPIRA of Florida, Inc.

Pat Tornillo, Executive Vice President
United Teachers of Dade

Guarione M. Díaz, Executive Director
Cuban National Planning Council

Dr. Eduardo J. Padrón, Vice President
Miami-Dade Community College
New World Cen[illegible]ampus

Mrs. Eva Somo[illegible]sistant Principal
Milan Elementary School

Ms. Yolanda Wohl
Community Activist and Consultant

Ms. Lyvia Alonso, Supervisor Bilingual/Exceptional Education
Dade County Public Schools

Luís A. Martínez-Pérez
Chair, ASPIRA of Florida, Inc.
Professor, School of Education
Florida International University

Ileana Ross, Principal
Eastern Academy
and Representative, Florida State Assembly

Ms. Silvia Unzueta, Senior Administrator, METRO/DADE
Dade County Courthouse
Office of the County Manager

Ms. Nancy Cuthbert
President, PTSO, Miami High School

Gilbert Quintero
Student, Miami High School

Diego García, Principal
Miami High School

Ms. Sylvia González, Vice President
CARECO

New York City

Ms. Fran Vásquez, Principal
Morris High School

Ms. Nitza Hidalgo, Student
Harvard University Graduate School of Education

Joan Carney, President
United Parents Associations

Robin Willner, Staff Director
Educational Priorities Panel

Ms. Sonia Rivera, Principal
Eastern District High School

Albert Vásquez, Principal
James Monroe High School

Mickey Martínez, Vice President
New York City Board of Education

Norman Wechsler, Assistant Principal
Morris High School

Ms. Iris Crawford-Danforth, Title VII Coordinator
Morris High School

Steven Redfield, Executive Director
United Parents Association

Anthony Alvarado, Chancellor
New York City Public Schools
Board of Education

Frank J. Melia, Assistant Principal
Supervision, Social Studies
Morris High School

Jack Valerio, Assistant Principal
Supervision, English
Morris High School

George Materon, Assistant Principal
ESL/Foreign Language/Bilingual Department
Morris High School

David Kroun, Assistant Principal
Department of Pupil Personnel
Morris High School

Commission met with a group of approximately 20 students from Morris High School

Chicago

Edwin Claudio, Director
Planning and Development
Latino Institute

Mario Aranda, Executive Director
Latino Institute

Dr. Ruth Love, Superintendent of Schools
Chicago Public Schools

Dr. Ricardo R. Fernández, Director
Midwest National Origin Desegregation Assistance Center
School of Education
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Dr. Gary Orfield, Professor
University of Chicago
Department of Political Science

Dr. Major Armstead, Executive Director
Chicago Public Schools
High School Renaissance Program

Dr. Patrick F. Ahearn, Executive Director
Chicago Public Schools
High School Renaissance Program

Rev. Charles Kyle
St. Francis Xavier Parish

Ms. María Cerda
Official, City of Chicago

Dr. Rodolfo García Z., Director of Research
Latino Institute

Various community groups met with small groups of Commissioners at:
- Roberto Clemente High School
- St. Mary's of Nazareth Hospital
- United Neighborhood Organization of Southeast Chicago
- Pilsen Neighbors Community Council
- San Agustin College

Note: Mr. Bruce Astrein, Boston, Massachusetts, of the National Coalition of Advocates for Students, appeared before the Commission at its Washington, D.C., meeting in May 1984.

NOTES

1. Nielsen and Fernández, p. 25. Baker, Paula, et al., p. 137, 138.
2. National Center for Education Statistics, 1982(b), p. 74.
3. See Borus, et al., p. 306. For White males, at age 35, some of the percentage distributions for desired occupation groups are as follows: white collar, 50.8 percent; blue collar, 27.7 percent; and service, 3.2 percent. For Hispanic males, the respective figures are 47.0 percent, 31.4 percent, and 4.1 percent. For White females: 52.2 percent, 3.9 percent, and 6.6 percent. For Hispanic females: 53.0 percent, 3.6 percent, and 8.5 percent.
4. Jusenius and Duarte, p. 48.
5. Higher Education and National Affairs, p. 3. Bureau of Labor Statistics, pp. 3-4.
6. Projections for the 15-to-19-year-olds for each metropolitan area derived from U.S. Census figures and reported in *Hispanic Almanac*, for Chicago, p. 62; Los Angeles, p. 90; Miami, p. 97; New York, p. 102; and San Antonio, p. 122. For the 1990 projection of 15-to-19-year-olds, we used the 1980 cohort of 5-to-9-year-olds, and for the 1995 projection we used the 1980 cohort of 0-to-4-year-olds. The projected total numbers of 15-to-19-year-olds in 1990 and 1995 are, respectively: Chicago, 532,778 and 525,668; Los Angeles, 530,903 and 553,335; New York, 574,582 and 583,702; Miami, 100,798 and 94,295; and San Antonio, 93,260 and 90,044.
7. Davis, Haub, and Willette, p. 9-10. *Hispanic Almanac*, p. 27-28. (Or see Volume II, Hispanic Profiles.)
8. McNett, p. 7.
9. Davis et al., p. 39.
10. Rose Institute, p. 1.
11. See Volume II, Hispanic Profiles.
12. See Volume II, Hispanic Profiles.
13. Pear(a), p. 1.
14. Thornton, p. 48.
15. Davis, et al., pp. 35 and 36.
16. Maeroff.
17. Martínez, Los Angeles.
18. Arreola, LA Transcript.
19. Vásquez, San Antonio Presentation.
20. Shipp.
21. Brown, et al., pp. 92-93.
22. Brown, et al., pp. 88-89.
    Durán, p. 56.
23. Brown, et al., pp. 80-81.
24. See Volume II, p. 58.
25. National Center for Education Statistics, 1981, p. 1.
26. Orfield, p. 12. See Fernández and Guskin for a review of issues and data concerning Hispanics and school desegregation.
27. National Center for Education Statistics, 1982 (c), pp. 51-52. Feistritzer, p. 27.
28. See Volume II, p. 59.
29. Ramist and Arbeiter, pp. iii-x.
30. National Center for Education Statistics, 1984, p. 160. Bureau of Labor Statistics, pp. 3-4.
31. Sandoval, p. 10.
32. Commission on the Higher Education of Minorities, pp. 14-16.
33. Ibid., p. 16.
34. Sandoval, p. 15.
35. See Volume II, p. 60.
36. See Volume II, p. 61.
37. Kurkjian, Day 5.
38. Unpublished tabulation by Dr. Sally Bould, Department of Sociology, University of Delaware.
39. For further information contact:
    ASPIRA Of America, Inc.
    114 East 28th Street
    New York, N.Y. 10016
    (202) 889-6101
40. For further information contact:
    LULAC National Education Service Centers
    National Headquarters
    400 First Street, N.W., Suite 713
    Washington, D.C. 20001
    (202) 347-1652
41. Goodlad, p. 70. See Ascher for a comprehensive review of high school characteristics that are most likely to decrease inner-city student alienation.
42. Boyer, pp. 314-315.
43. For further information contact:
    Cities in Schools, Inc.
    1110 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Suite 1120
    Washington, D.C. 20005
    (202) 861-0230
44. See Volume II, p. 62 and 63.
45. See Volume II, p. 65.
46. National Center for Education Statistics, 1984 (b), p.7.
47. National Commission on Excellence in Education, p. 18. See Kirst for additional information on academic standards for American high schools.
48. See Volume II, p. 59.
49. See Montalvo in Volume II, p. 67.
50. Orfield, p. 12.
51. See Montalvo in Volume II, for a first-hand account of effective high schools.
52. For an example of a recognition program, see Ford Foundation's *City High Schools*.
53. Goodlad, pp. 297-298.
54. Panel on Secondary School Education for the Changing Workplace, p. 19.
55. Gibbons and Phillips, pp. 55-60.
56. Levin, Glass, and Meister, p. 30.
57. See Borus, et al., p. 271. Because students could give more than one reason for dropping out in the "High School and Beyond" survey, we prefer to cite here the comparable figures from the Labor Department's 1979

National Longitudinal Survey (NLS) which allowed the respondent to give only one reason for leaving school. But our judgment is that both surveys support our basic findings on why Hispanics leave school. The specific reasons and percentage distributions from the NLS for Hispanic males are as follows: "home responsibilities," 11.3 percent; "offered a good job and chose to work," 18.9 percent; "financial difficulties, couldn't afford to attend," 10.7 percent. The figures for Hispanic females are, respectively, 5.6 percent, 7.4 percent, and 9.8 percent.

58. See Note 57. Reasons and percentage distributions for Hispanic females leaving school are, in addition to those cited above, "getting married," 16.1 percent, and "pregnancy," 16.8 percent.
59. Hirano-Nakanishi, pp. 8-9.
60. See Walker in Volume II.
61. Gueron.
62. See Walker in Volume II.
63. See Charner and Fraser in Volume II.
64. For further information contact:
    Corporation for Public/Private Ventures
    399 Market Street
    Philadelphia, Pa. 19106
    (215) 592-9099
65. For further information contact:
    Grinker, Walker & Associates
    1500 Broadway, Suite 2107
    New York, N.Y. 10036
    (212) 302-0540
66. See Volume II, p. 60.
67. Naisbitt, p. 78.
68. Statistical Office of the United Nations, Demographic Year Book, pp. 133-134.
69. Collins, p. 53.
70. Bilingual middle-class Hispanics earn slightly more than comparable Hispanics who speak only English, according to an analysis of the Census Bureau's 1976 Survey of Income and Education by Dr. Calvin Veltman of the University of Montreal.
71. President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies, p. 6.
72. See Volume II, p. 61.
73. Odden, p. 19.
74. Pear(b), p. A18.
75. Fiske, p. A1.
76. For a review of model programs implementing more effective schooling research findings, see Codianni and Wilbur. See Firestone and Herriott, and Presseisen for useful cautions in applying effective school research findings in high schools. For the view of a former school superintendent in converting effective school research into practice at the district level, see Cuban. See Joyce, Hersh, and McKibbin for an analysis of the school improvement process and concrete strategies to help guide each stage of the process.
77. Greer.
78. Davis, et al., p. 29.

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Hispanic Policy Development Project

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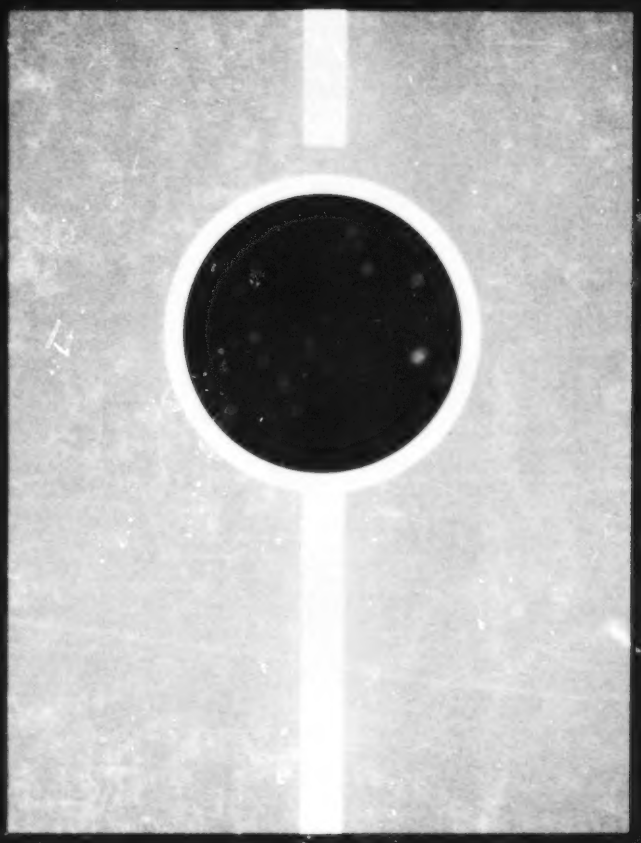

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